

ARTICLE XXVI.

Eulogium on Valentine Mott, M. D., LL. D. By GUNNING S. BEDFORD, M. D.

[Read before the Medical Society of the County of New York, Feb. 1, 1866.]

Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the New York County Medical Society :

WE have assembled here, to-night, to speak of the illustrious dead, and offer our tribute of respect and affection to the memory of a great surgeon, an honored citizen, an exemplary Christian.

Valentine Mott has passed from earth at a ripe old age, and in the fullness of his professional fame, bearing with him the praises of those who knew him best, and the benedictions of the thousands, who had been the recipients of his kindness and skill.

“ *Multis ille bonis fibellis occidit.* ”

He has obeyed the summons which, sooner or later, awaits us all ; he now reposes with more than the quietude of sleep in the silent tomb ; but yet he is not dead—he will live in the future, and his name will be a “ moon-track in the vast ocean of history.” The triumph of death is not always complete, for when the good man surrenders his spirit, he leaves in his past acts a monument to his memory more enduring than bronze or sculptured marble ; a monument which will command public appreciation, and prove a sweet balm to the grief of surviving relatives and friends. Well may we exclaim on this occasion :

“ *Oh ! Grave, where is thy victory ? Oh ! Death, where is thy sting ?* ”

In 1861, Gentlemen of the Medical Society, I had the honor, by your appointment, to deliver a eulogium on the late John Wakefield Francis, M. D. From that address I make the following extract : “ Dr. Francis was one of the few last links, which connect the past with the present history of the profession in this city. With but rare exceptions, those who commenced professional life with him have passed away. Many of them attained a good old age, and, like himself, departed full of merited honors, while their graves were consecrated by the tears and grateful recollections of those they left behind. One of his earliest friends, an unbroken friendship of more than half a century—is still with us ; and let us, in the sincerity of our hearts, invoke Heaven that he may be spared, as one whose example is not only worthy of imitation, but whose renown, as one of the great surgeons of the age, reflects credit on our city, and exalts the profession of which he is so illustrious a member. In the last illness of Dr. Francis, it was, indeed, a comfort to him to have at his bedside his old friend and companion, Dr. Mott. He not only enjoyed the benefit of his skill, but he was refreshed by the fact that, in his critical hour, when sinking nature was fast yielding to the universal and inexorable conqueror, he had near him one who had grown up with him from boyhood, one who had never

deserted him in life, and when the last struggle was over, one who would gently close his eyelids in death.

"There yet lives another of the fathers of the profession—one, also, who was a contemporary of Dr. Francis. He, too, has added to his country's renown, and the dignity of the profession, by his brilliant achievements, and the fostering spirit he has so universally manifested for the progress and spread of science. The name of Dr. Alexander H. Stevens will always be associated with the dignity of medicine in the city of New York; and may he be long with us, to enlighten us with his counsels, and cheer us by his example."

Such, gentlemen, was my language in 1861; and as time has rolled on, and left its footprints, with unerring progress by day and by night, one more of the few remaining links has given way. We are here, this evening, to lay on the altar of mutual friendship the incense of our homage to exalted worth; and we are here, I repeat, to speak of Dr. Mott as a great surgeon, and of his character as a man and a Christian. This honorable duty which you, in your kindness, have imposed upon me, I could not refuse; for, in accepting the sacred office of his eulogist, I experienced a melancholy pleasure in the conviction that, in recurring to some of the more prominent details of his eventful life, memory would irresistibly revert to many of the agreeable reminiscences connected with the professional history of my honored master, cherished friend, and distinguished colleague; for, gentlemen, he stood towards me in all these relations.

It would, perhaps, have been better had some more suitable one among you been selected for the purpose, and yet I may be permitted to say that there is no member of your association who could bring more of earnest heart, more of sincere affection to the accomplishment of the task than myself. I shall, therefore, to the best of my ability, endeavor faithfully to perform the office which your kindness has devolved upon me.

It cannot be expected that I should do more, on this occasion, than present a rapid review of some of the more salient points in his life. The sacred office of the biographer, with an elaborate analysis of his labors and writings, will occupy the pen of the future historian.

Valentine Mott, M. D. LL. D., was born at Glen Cove, Oyster Bay, Long Island, August 20th, 1785. His father, Dr. Henry Mott, a native of Hempstead, L. I., was born in 1757. He entered the office of Dr. Samuel Bard, and received his medical education under the supervision of that distinguished physician. Dr. Henry Mott, after practicing medicine for many years in the city of New York, died at the advanced age of eighty-three. His son, Valentine, received his scholastic education in a private seminary at Newtown, Long Island, where he remained until 1804. At this time he commenced the study of medicine in the office of his relative, Dr. Valentine Seaman, and became a pupil of the Medical Faculty of Columbia College, in this city. It was originally called King's College, but at the close of the war received the title of Columbia College, and the organization of its Medical Faculty was completed in 1792.

In 1806, our friend graduated with much credit to himself, and had conferred on him the degree of M. D., by the Trustees of the Medical Faculty

of Columbia College. The subject of his Inaugural Dissertation was an *Experimental Enquiry into the Chemical and Medicinal Properties of the Statice Limonium, of Linnaeus*. This dissertation, which was most favorably received, was affectionately dedicated by Dr. Mott to his father, and his friends, Dr. Valentine Seaman and Dr. David Hosack.

Immediately after graduating, anxious to avail himself of the rich fountains of European knowledge and experience, Dr. Mott visited London, thirsting, as it were, for the instruction of the eminent men who were the most prominent at that time in the surgical profession of that great Metropolis—among whom may be named the two Clines, Sir Astley Cooper, John Abernethy, the two Blizzards, and Sir Everard Home. Soon after his arrival in London, he called on Sir Astley Cooper, the surgeon of Guy's Hospital, by whom he was most kindly and courteously received. Dr. Mott very soon consummated arrangements by which he became the private pupil of that eminent surgeon ; and, gentlemen of the medical profession, you can well appreciate how zealously our friend availed himself of the inexhaustible stores of knowledge which this connection placed within his reach.

After remaining in London for two years, drinking deep and faithfully of the abundant springs of surgical science, which were so inviting to his professional taste, he repaired to Edinburgh, at that time the great seat of medical learning in Europe. Here he listened to the lessons of those eminent masters, Gregory, Duncan, Hope, Murray, Playfair, Jamison, and John Thompson—names which will be respected and live in all future time on the page of Medical History.

Still solicitous to extend the area of his observation, and imbibe instruction from all the great sources of civilization, he was most desirous to visit the Continent of Europe. For this purpose, he made “a fruitless attempt to smuggle himself in a fishing boat to Holland, intending to walk thence to the Hague, with his pack on his back.”* But at that time, war was raging most fiercely between France and Great Britain, and the precautions adopted by Napoleon to prevent the entrance of foreigners into France were so rigid, that, at the suggestion of friends, he abandoned the perilous enterprise.

In the spring of 1809, Dr. Mott returned to New York. He now felt that previous study, and the extraordinary opportunities he had enjoyed abroad, and of which he had so faithfully availed himself, had prepared him for the practical duties of his profession. He, therefore, almost immediately after his return home, with the consent of the Faculty, obtained permission from the Trustees of Columbia College to deliver, in the anatomical room of the Medical College, a course of lectures and demonstrations on *Operative Surgery*. In speaking of this circumstance, in an address on the *Reminiscences of Medical Teaching in New York*, delivered November 7th, 1850, Dr. Mott, with conscious pride, observes : “I may justly claim to have been the first person to deliver private lectures on any medical subject in the city of New York, and the first to demonstrate to a class of students the steps of surgical operations, as then taught and

* *Reminiscences of Medical Teachers in New York*, by Valentine Mott, 1850.

practiced by the highest professional authorities. I trust," he continues, "I shall be excused for this allusion to my early essay in teaching, upon which, at this remote period, imperfectly as no doubt I performed the duty, I confess that I look back with great pleasure. I owe to it, undoubtedly, the subsequent honor of a Professor of Surgery in this College."

In 1811, Dr. Mott, then but 26 years of age, was elected Professor of Surgery in the Medical Department of Columbia College; the duties involved in this appointment he performed with honor to himself, and to the entire satisfaction of his colleagues. In 1813, a union was cemented between the Medical Faculties of Columbia College and the College of Physicians and Surgeons, resulting in the formation of but one school in the city of New York—that of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

In 1814, Dr. Mott, whose reputation was now gradually but surely progressing, commensurately with his efforts to be useful, was nominated by that distinguished anatomist and surgeon, Dr. Wright Post, for the chair of surgery in the new alliance, and he was unanimously elected. In alluding to this appointment, in the address to which I have already referred, he thus speaks: "Devoted, as I then was, to my favorite pursuit, Surgery, and eager for distinction, I leave you, gentlemen, to imagine the delight I experienced when, meeting me in the street soon after my appointment, Dr. Post got out of his gig and announced to me the gratifying and wholly unexpected intelligence."

From this time his course was onward, and each succeeding year added to his reputation—*fama crescit eundo*—and brought him numerous patients, who were most anxious to avail themselves of the skill, as his friend Dr. Francis described him, of the "well-dressed and handsome young surgeon," when he commenced professional life in this city—alluding, at the same time, to the numerous hearts he broke, and the fractured limbs he set. It does not, however, appear to me to be a logical sequitur, that setting broken limbs for the gentlemen could, in any way, compensate the gentle and confiding ladies for the damage done to their hearts. This, it may be remarked, is altogether a question of taste, and I submit it to the decision of the ladies themselves.

Dr. Mott continued his relations with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, gathering for himself a sound reputation, both by his lectures and the brilliancy of his surgical achievements, until 1826, when politics, a very disturbing element, entered the counsels of the Board of Regents at Albany, resulting in the enactment of certain resolutions, so obnoxious to the Faculty, that they resigned in a body. The retirement of the Faculty was succeeded by a new organization in the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Unwilling, however, to remain idle, and feeling an earnest interest in the profession, determined to maintain its progress and dignity, the retiring Faculty became incorporated under the title of Rutger's Medical College, and erected a commodious building for their purposes in Duane street. The names of the gentlemen composing this new school were as follows:

Valentine Mott, M. D.; David Hosack, M. D.; Wm. James McNeven, M. D.; John W. Francis, M. D.; John Griscom, M. D.; John D. Godman, M. D.

The Rutger's Medical College, after a prosperous but short-lived existence of only five years, was compelled to close its doors in 1831, in consequence of a defect in its charter, rendering its degrees illegal.

I trust I may be pardoned, on this occasion, for alluding briefly to one of the members of this new Faculty, and be permitted to throw a passing flower to his honored memory—I mean the late John D. Godman, M. D. He was my first preceptor, my early counsellor, my devoted friend—*Amicus certus in re incertâ facile cernitur*. He was a man of dazzling and irresistible eloquence; the witchery of his speech made captive his listeners; it was his eloquence which changed the whole destiny of my life, and whether I should be thankful or otherwise, or whether those who have been subjected to my professional ministrations should be content, it is not for me to determine.

From my early boyhood, I had always cherished an ardent desire to study law. As soon as I had completed my academic education, and obtained my degree of A. M., I returned to my native home, the city of Baltimore, and in order to carry out my original intention, I was kindly provided with a letter of introduction to Daniel Webster, requesting him to receive me as his pupil, by General Robert Goodloe Harper, of Baltimore, the distinguished lawyer, and son-in-law of the venerated patriot, Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

I immediately bade adieu to my native city, and directed my course towards Boston, for the purpose of presenting my letter to the great constitutional lawyer, the man of colossal intellect, whose name, with that of Henry Clay, will always be held in holy veneration by his countrymen. I arrived in Philadelphia about two o'clock, and while taking dinner, a gentleman, a student of medicine from Virginia, asked me if I would not accompany him that afternoon to hear a lecture on Anatomy. The word *anatomy* caused my flesh to quiver, and produced a remarkably strange sensation. However, as my *Æsculapian* friend seemed so solicitous for me to accompany him, recovering somewhat from my perturbation, I reluctantly consented, determining to renew my journey early in the morning for Boston. We proceeded on our way to the lecture hall; the lecture had already commenced. Dr. John D. Godman was the speaker; he had before him a *cadaver*, and was discoursing on the muscles of the shoulder-joint. I will not attempt to describe the scene or the feelings I experienced five minutes after I had entered that room. The appearance of the lecturer, his dark grey eyes, his pallid cheeks, his high and expansive forehead, his voice which combined both music and power, his language so beautiful and touching, his manner so earnest and yet so classic—in one word, the *tout ensemble* of the man so deeply interested me, that I was enchained, charmed, converted. I forgot my day and night dreams about law; I forgot my letter; and even the lustre of the great name of Webster for the instant waned into comparative insignificance.

As soon as the lecture was over, I approached the gifted speaker, and, without a moment's hesitation, observed to him: Do you receive private pupils? He kindly took my hand, and, with a gentle smile playing on his countenance, replied—Do you wish to study medicine, my young friend? I have no will on the subject, sir; your eloquence has deprived me of all will;

and if you will receive me as your pupil, I shall take you as my model, and will labor with zeal and untiring effort not to dishonor your name. That evening, by invitation, I called at his house, taking with me my Boston letter, together with others with which I had been provided, all of which were submitted to his inspection. Before nine o'clock that evening I was the pupil of John D. Godman, M. D.

I quote with much pleasure the following language of Dr. Mott, in proof of the high opinion he entertained of my early preceptor:—"In the perfection of his anatomical knowledge, in eloquence and efficiency as a lecturer, Dr. Godman was not surpassed in this, and, perhaps, not in any other country. He was one of the meteors whose brightness dazzles for the moment ere it fades, and leaves the darkness more visible than before. This country, in my opinion, has produced few abler men in the profession than the late John D. Godman."

If you will pardon me for this digression, I will mention one incident connected with the life of Dr. Godman, which I have always regarded with very great interest. In early life he was a sailor-boy, and, at one time, his mind was rather disposed to infidelity; but he could not long resist the eloquent demonstrations of Nature, and he became a most sincere and practical Christian. He remarked, on one occasion, that, when an apprentice on board of a vessel, he was ordered to go aloft to perform some duty; he had not proceeded far when he suddenly stopped, and the captain, in a gruff voice, shouted out—*You land-lubber, why don't you go on? Sir,* answered young Godman, *I am dizzy—I am afraid I shall fall.* The captain immediately retorted—*Look aloft!*

In alluding to this circumstance, I have repeatedly heard him remark, that in subsequent life, when no longer a sailor-boy, but when the cares of the world, in feeble health himself, with a young family dependent entirely on his own efforts, would occasionally make him dizzy, he could imagine that he heard the echo of the gruff voice of the captain, and he would never fail to "*look aloft,*" and in earnest spirit and confident hope, breathe a prayer to Heaven. That prayer, he said, was always a comfort, and enabled him to sustain himself under the pressure of his tribulations.

It is not surprising to me that this brilliant man, in the study of the medical profession, abandoned his infidel tendencies, and had his mind strengthened and fortified with religious convictions. It has been charged, I am aware, by the ignorant and unthinking, that the pursuit of our science not only disturbs and weakens the mind in its religious faith, but that it leads to positive infidelity. What, permit me to ask, is the basis of that science? Is it not Anatomy, which discloses the exquisitely beautiful and intricate structure of man—a structure full of the evidences of infinite power; a structure so complicated, and yet so perfect, that it bears, in all its parts, the fiat of Divine Wisdom. The study of Medicine, while it fortifies the Christian mind and elevates Christian hope, points out through the splendid demonstrations of Anatomy—demonstrations which take a deep hold of the human heart—the fallacies of the sophist and the absurd dreams of the sceptic. In our daily avocations, while engaged in that most necessary part of our duties—I mean the dissection of the dead—we have constantly revealed to us testimony, well suited to the reviler of God's works;

he would there find, what all the lessons of the moralist have failed to show him, positive and undoubted demonstration. His reason would become convinced by the eloquence of nature; her silent yet graphic displays would force him, in the pride of his heart, to exclaim—the finger of Omnipotence is indeed here! Our profession not only enables us to dispense the benefits of a science, intended by the Creator to alleviate the sufferings of the human race, but it embodies, at the same time, irresistible evidences of His own infinite wisdom; it exhibits the majesty of God, and discloses the comparative insignificance of man, reminding him of that great immutable truth :

“What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue.”

The eloquent and gifted Tully, even in the dark ages of the profession, before the sun of our science had made its way above the horizon, characterized it as almost divine in its nature:—“*Homines ad Deos in nulla re se proprius accedunt quam salutem hominibus dando.*” The glorious St. Augustin, too, one of the pillars of the Christian church, observes:—“*Qui precepta Medici non sequitur Ipse se interemit.*”

After the closing of the doors of Rutger’s Medical College, in 1831, Dr. Mott was again appointed Professor of Operative Surgery, with Surgical and Pathological Anatomy, in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which position he occupied until 1834, when failing health, the result of nearly thirty years of unbroken professional labor, unrelieved by change of scene or recreation, compelled him abruptly to suspend his lectures, and seek for the restoration of his health in foreign climes. His travels were extensive, and with marked benefit to his health, embracing Europe, Asia, and Africa. It was during these travels that the great Surgeon, full of love for his profession, and *nunquam non paratus* for a surgical operation, tied both the carotids of a noble rooster in the valley of *Æsculapius*, and sacrificed him to the memory of that philosopher. How much more gloriously did that rooster die than many of his kindred, who have their heads chopped off in the most unscientific and unsurgical manner, merely for the gratification of the animal appetite!

In 1840, Dr. Mott returned to New York, and was welcomed home by numerous friends, and by none more cordially than his professional brethren, who knew so well how to appreciate his sterling worth. The day after his arrival, I was one of a committee of three to call at his house, and announce to him that he had been elected to the Chair of Surgery in the University Medical College, which had just been established in connection with the Academic Department of the New York University. The Committee, it is needless to say, were highly gratified by his acceptance. The following gentlemen constituted the newly appointed Faculty:

Valentine Mott, M. D., Granville Sharpe Pattison, M. D., John Revere, M. D., Martyn Paine, M. D., John W. Draper, M. D., Gunning S. Bedford, M. D.

The success of this School was remarkable. We opened our first session of lectures in 1841 with 164 students. It was not long before this Institution had inscribed on its catalogue the names of 450 students, the great majority of whom came from south of the Potomac river. Nor was this unexampled prosperity checked until the unhappy contest with our South-

ern brethren, which has more than crimsoned this fair land of ours with a brother's blood! But it has pleased Heaven to throw the mantle of its protection over this distracted country, and make us once again a great, united, and happy people, and thus secured for our children the most precious inheritance which has ever been transmitted from father to son—the *American Union!* Who can forget the glories of the past—who can obliterate from memory the heroic deeds of our Patriot Fathers, and that unequalled document, the *Declaration of Independence*—in which, on bended knee, first invoking the blessing of Heaven, they swore that they and their children should be forever free! May the sacred ashes which repose on the banks of the Potomac, under the venerated shades of Mount Vernon, remind us of our duty, and so impress us with the lofty patriotism of the Father of our Country as to make us resolve—both North and South—that, in all future time, not one solitary stone of the arch, which gives support to the National fabric, shall be loosened from its foundation—not one star dimmed, nor one stripe rent from the glorious old Flag, which has never yet gone down in dishonor in any equal contest with a foreign foe!

Dr. Mott, on the organization of the University Medical College, was unanimously elected President of the Faculty, and, with the exception of the year 1851, continued his relations with the university until the time of his death.

I have thus very imperfectly glanced at some of the laborious duties performed by our friend. He was more or less constantly engaged in public teaching for a period of fifty-six years, from 1809 to 1865; and associated with the duties of his professorship were those of an extensive practice, involving more or less constant anxiety. It is amazing to think of the amount of labor that this great surgeon performed. His life was, indeed, one of activity and usefulness. He did not live in vain!

“O vita, stulta longa, sapienti brevis.”

Dr. Mott, as a lecturer, was most interesting. His experience was so vast; his observation so acute; his enthusiasm for his favorite pursuit—Surgery—so undying, that his lecture-hall was always crowded with students and physicians anxious to profit by the prelections of one, in whose counsels they had an abiding confidence, and whose record they knew to be the record of truth.

But the reputation of Dr. Mott, which will render his name immortal as one of the great surgeons of the nineteenth century, is, in great part, due to the original and startling operations emanating from his own unaided judgment, and performed, with a calmness and self-possession, demonstrating conclusively that he had all the instincts of a well-grounded conviction that he was right, which the result has emphatically proved.

The following letter, written by Dr. Mott to his young friend, Dr. Samuel W. Francis, will explain itself:—

“NEW YORK, May 14th, 1863.

“MY DEAR FRIEND:—

“At your kind request I have enclosed a list of most of my original operations. They were all performed without my ever having heard or

read of their being done by any one before. This you have from my own pen, and I declare it before all men.

"Men who have never done anything themselves, have attempted to rob me of some of them, but I stand on the firm and immovable rock of truth, and none of them make me afraid.

"Original Operations."

"Tying the arteria innominata.

"Tying the primitive iliac.

"Exsection of the clavicle. This is the most important and difficult operation that can be performed by man.

"Exsection of the lower jaw in different positions.

"Immobility of the lower jaw.

"Cutting out two inches of the deep jugular vein, inseparably imbedded in a tumor, and tying both ends of the vein.

"Closing, with a fine ligature, wounds of large veins, of a longitudinal or transverse kind, and even when an *olive-sliced piece* has been cut out.

These I have seen, and by pinching up the wound with forceps, and applying a small ligature, the wound has healed without obliterating the canal of the vein. In this way I treated successfully the great axillary and the deep jugular.

"Your attached friend,

"V. MOTT."

"DR. S. W. FRANCIS."

In addition to these original operations, Dr. Mott has tied the primitive carotid artery forty-six times, performed the operation of lithotomy one hundred and sixty-five times, and amputated nearly one thousand limbs, besides other innumerable operations of a minor grade. Truly it may be said of this great surgeon that he made many friends by *cutting* his acquaintances. But it is due to his memory to remark that, during his whole professional career, he was eminently conservative. He did not thirst for innocent blood, nor would he sacrifice a limb for the mere eclat of an operation. How often have I heard him, when attending his lectures as a pupil, speak thus to his class: "Young gentlemen, allow me to urge you, when about to perform an important surgical operation, ask yourselves solemnly whether, in the same situation, you would be willing to submit to it. If you say yes, then perform it. Such, young gentlemen, is my advice to you." What a benevolent, Christian maxim do these words embody—"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

The following little incident may not be without interest;—Five and thirty years elapsed from the time Dr. Mott left Sir Astley Cooper in London, until he again had the pleasure of seeing his old preceptor. He called at his house on arriving in London, and without announcing his name, walked up to Sir Astley, and said, extending his hand to the eminent English surgeon, "Do you recollect me, Sir Astley?" "Do not tell me your name," he promptly replied, and, in a moment afterwards, added, "You are Dr. Mott, the only man on earth I envy." This was, indeed, a high compliment, and tells in emphatic language the story of our friend's world-renowned fame.

Dr. Mott, at an early age, and when a demonstrator of anatomy to Prof. Wright Post, and even in subsequent years, frequently engaged in hazardous enterprises, as the following grave story will show ; I give you the facts in his own language : A German, who had been hung, was given to the college for dissection, and with the colored porter, I went in a carriage in the evening to procure the body. My other associate was a Doctor Buchanan, a Scotch gentleman, residing in the city. On calling at his room to take him in the carriage, I found him arranging his pistols, and complaining of feeling extremely agueish ; it was with great difficulty I persuaded him to accompany me. The night was cold, and on arriving on the ground the doctor's ague increased so rapidly, and his valor oozed, like Bob Acres', in the *Rivals*, so freely from the tips of his fingers, that he decided to return home, begging piteously for the use of the carriage, which I peremptorily refused. With great difficulty we exhumed the body, but then my colored associate also deserted me, declaring that he could not touch the dead man, on account of his having been hung. I had, therefore, to lug the body, attired in its white robes, by my own strength to the carriage—for I had great strength in those days—and partly by force, and partly by menaces, compelled the man to assist me in getting the body in the carriage, and what was still more difficult, to get in along with it, so thoroughly was he terrified. On arriving at the college, I found my valorous associate, the doctor, slowly recovering from his ague fit, by the aid of a glass of strong brandy toddy."

I hope, gentle ladies, you will not be shocked at the recital of this story. The public know but little of our pursuits as medical men. Could they but look down the dark and dreary vista of our studies, see its terminus—the charnel-house—and there contemplate us while engaged in our sickening and loathsome investigations—our communion with the dead—they would then be better prepared to appreciate the sacrifices of the profession. In this silent converse with the dead, often carried on amid impurities which a high-toned philanthropy alone enables us to sustain, we contemplate the wonderful mechanism of the human frame—a mechanism, above all others, the most perfect, because it bears the impress of God himself. We extract from the dead, knowledge which enables us to serve the living, and rescue them from the ravages of disease.

Dr. Mott was not idle with his pen, as the following letter to his friend, Dr. Samuel W. Francis, will show :

“ NEW YORK, May 20th, 1863.

“ DEAR DOCTOR :—I have enclosed for you most of my little doings in the way of writing. No one has had from me such papers (a list of original operations and papers), and perhaps they may be of use to some hereafter.

“ *Papers Published.*

“ Relative anatomy of the subclavian arteries within the scaleni muscles.

“ Memoirs on injuries of the skull and brain, illustrated by cases.

“ Essay on pulsation in epigastrio.

“ Memoir on tying the arteria innominata.

“ Several papers on exsection of the lower jaw in various portions, and articulation on one side; with plates.

"Cases illustrating the utility of tying the common carotid for the safe removal of large tumors, and starving malignant diseases which cannot be extirpated.

"Removal of thyroid body which weighed four pounds, with entire success.

"Nasal operation, with plates. Original. Successful.

"Distal—anticardial or brasdorean operation on the right carotid for aneurism of the innominata. Successful.

"Amputation at the hip joint. Successful. Plates.

"Papers on ligature of carotids, subclavians, external and internal iliacs.

"Exsection of clavicle for enormous osteo-sarcomar, ulcerated and bleeding. Successful.

"Essay on the treatment of ununited fractures. Illustrated by cases.

"Memoirs on a peculiar tumor of the skin, which we have named *Pachadermatocoele*. Illustrated by drawings and cases.

"Papers on laceration of the corpus cavernosum, with cases.

"Memoirs on the removal of enormous tumors of the neck of small children, with cases and drawings. In one of the cases more than two inches of the internal jugular were removed, being imbedded in the tumor. Vein tied above and below. Recovered.

"Papers on tying the left subclavian under the scalenus anticus, attended with peculiar circumstances. Recovered.

"Letter to Amussat on the effects of admission of air in the veins in surgical operations.

"Letter to Liston, claiming originality in lower jaw operations. (See his last editions.)

"Paper on the malignant pneumonia which prevailed at Newtown, Long Island, more than fifty years since. Dr. Jos. M. Smith quoted it in his book on climate. * * *

"Truly your friend,

"V. MOTT.

"Dr. S. W. FRANCIS."

To this list may be added—

Case of Diabetes.

Sketch of the Life of Wright Post, M. D.

Mott's Velpeau, 4 vols., 8vo., New York, Illustrated.

Anniversary Discourse before the Graduates of the University of New York (1860).

Dr. Mott has also written within the past few years, a Discourse before the Binghamton (New York) State Inebriate Asylum.

Eulogy on John W. Francis, M. D., before New York Academy of Medicine.

Pain and Anæsthesia. Printed by the Sanitary Commission.

Dr. Mott received, as an evidence of his great merit, many honorary titles. They are as follows:

LL. D. University of the State of New York; Emeritus Professor of Operative Surgery in the University of New York; ex-President of the

Faculty,—ex-President of the New York Academy of Medicine; Fellow of the Medical Societies of Louisiana, New York, Connecticut, and Rhode-Island, and President of the New York State Inebriate Asylum; Fellow of the Imperial Academy of Medicine; of the Chirurgical Society of Paris; Fellow of the Medical and Chirurgical Societies of London and Brussels; Honorary Fellow of King's and Queen's College of Physicians of Ireland, &c., &c.

Gentlemen of the New York County Medical Society—There is one fact, which may not be familiar to many of your junior members, and which, I think, confers distinguished honor on your ancient association. You have now been in existence for a period of sixty years, and the first candidate who applied for examination before your learned body, and received his license, was Dr. Valentine Mott; and on the 8th day of July, 1813, he was elected censor of your Society. This is, indeed, a noble prestige.

Dr. Mott, distinguished as a great surgeon, was eminently so as a man, and a consistent and conscientious Christian. His heart was always in the right place; he was not only philanthropic, but was imbued in a remarkable degree with some of the finest attributes which impart dignity and value to human character. To the poor he was a consistent friend; he assuaged their sufferings, and mitigated their afflictions by no mean liberality. Who can forget his gentle smile, and that cordial pressure of the hand, which seemed always warm with his heart's blood! His presence in the sick room, so delightful and gentle was his manner, was oftentimes the very balm of Gilead to the unhappy sufferer. Dr. Mott, too, was a patriot. He loved his whole country, and gloried in the *Union*. In one word, he was a good and loyal citizen. As an example of the sympathies which always found shelter around the great surgeon's heart, it may be mentioned that he never recovered from the sudden shock of President Lincoln's assassination. The sad intelligence was communicated to him on the morning of the 15th of April; he immediately sought his wife in an adjoining room, exclaiming: "My dear, I have received such a shock—President Lincoln has been murdered;" and resuming his seat, his countenance with the pallor of death, he looked up in great pain, and feebly said, "Oh! my back!" It is the conviction of Dr. Mott's family that this event contributed to his last illness, which commenced on the 22d of April. During that illness, the duration of which was four days and eight hours, he received from the attending and consulting physicians, whose aid was invoked, the most unremitting attention, accompanied by an earnest desire to do all in their power to mitigate his sufferings in the hour of his anguish. The attending physicians were Drs. Flint and Vanderpoel—and subsequently, Drs. Alexander H. Stevens, Joseph M. Smith, and Metcalfe saw him in counsel. But death had selected his victim, and science stood appalled.

It was not until the 25th of April that his son, Dr. Alexander B. Mott, returned home from the army. The instant of his arrival found him at the bedside of his father, which he never left until that parent had surrendered his spirit, which occurred April 26th, 1865, at 1 P. M., in the 80th year of his age. Let the son remember the example of the father; let him not

forget that he has a sacred duty to perform in sustaining his great name; and may Heaven give him strength to wear gracefully the mantle which has fallen upon him!

Dr. Mott died a Christian—he was prepared for the summons. He knew his duty to the world—he had not forgotten his obligations to his God:

“Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it. He died,
As one that had been studied in his death,
To throw away the dearest thing he own'd,
As 'twere a careless trifle.”

He died amid the surroundings of his family, and it must have been sweet for him to have around him, at his critical moment, those who loved him—those who were the treasures of his heart! The last words to which he gave utterance were—“My daughter,” in recognition of an attempt to moisten his parched lips. Oh! what a precious memento! Will not these words form a link which will forever bind in memory the child to the parent!

He lisped “my daughter,”

“Then closed his eyes, and sunk to endless sleep!”

Honor to the great Surgeon's memory! Peace to his manes!